



STATE OF INDIANA
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For Immediate Release

Excise Officers Arrest, Cite 100 at Scheid Diesel Extravaganza

TERRE HAUTE, Ind. (Aug. 24) – Indiana State Excise Police officers arrested or cited 100 people on 103 charges during Scheid Diesel Extravaganza in Terre Haute this weekend.

Some of the charges included: criminal recklessness (20), illegal possession or consumption of alcohol (17), furnishing alcohol to minors (6) and various drug-possession charges (4).

Gregory Johnson, 24, of Augusta, Kan., was jailed on Thursday night on preliminary charges of possession of a legend drug, possession of marijuana and possession of paraphernalia after an excise officer saw a 15-year-old passenger smoking a cigarette in Johnson's car.

Travis McDonald, 22, of Campbellsville, Ky., was jailed on Saturday night on a preliminary charge of possession of a handgun without a permit after officers stopped his for improper display of license plate.

Also on Saturday, excise officers found a 16-year-old boy from Sullivan, Ind., passed out in his own vomit next to broken beer bottles in the bed of a pickup truck in the parking lot at Big Lots on U.S. 41. When officers woke him up, he had no idea where he was or whose truck he was in. He was charged with illegal consumption of alcohol and released to a parent.

Excise officers worked closely with Indiana State Police and the Vigo County Sheriff's Office to assist businesses along U.S. 41 south of I-70 in keeping their parking lots safe for their customers. Numerous business managers spoke with excise officers Friday and Saturday nights and requested help getting the large crowds of people to leave. Store managers complained about trucks doing burnouts in their lots, people urinating on their buildings and exposing themselves. Dozens of officers spent hours clearing their lots. One business put up barricades at its entrances after closing Saturday night, only to have them destroyed and the store's lot filled with cars again.

Twenty people were arrested for criminal recklessness after they were observed power braking in large crowds of people in store parking lots along U.S. 41. Many of the trucks swayed in the rear while holding occupants in the truck beds, in addition to there being numerous pedestrians immediately next to all of the trucks.

"The goal of the state excise police is to ensure the safety of the patrons of this event and others around the state," said Superintendent Matt Strittmatter after working with excise officers on Friday and Saturday. "In order to achieve that goal, we must continue our efforts to make certain that alcohol is consumed responsibly and lawfully."

As the enforcement division of the Indiana Alcohol and Tobacco Commission, the primary mission of the Indiana State Excise Police is to promote public safety by enforcing Indiana's Alcoholic Beverage Code. While excise officers have the authority to enforce any state law, they focus primarily on alcohol, tobacco and related laws.

All criminal defendants are to be presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.